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ABSTRACT

This speech presents a brief history of the development of basic principles of IGE (Individually Guided Education) and IGE schools; a description of IGE programs as they exist today follows. Among the many aspects of IGE noted in this speech, two are highlighted: a) the program assists teachers in varying instructional settings to meet different purposes for different students, and b) the program helps teachers develop ways of organizing instruction to accommodate differences in student responses to individual teachers. There are brief discussions of the following components of IGE schools: the teacher as advisor, IGE Clinical Training Workshops, nongraded schools, and the use of an IGE-trained facilitator who serves as intermediary between the different institutions. The speech ends with a description of the National Evaluation Study of Attitudes towards IGE. The study found that attitudes towards IGE are overwhelmingly favorable. (JA)

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IGE - The Schools, The State and The College

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IGE - The Schools, The State and The College

This past month Charles Willis, Program Officer of the Idea-Kettering Foundation, released an Interim Report entitled, "What We Have Learned About The Idea Change Program for Individually Guided Education." In the introduction he noted: "We committed ourselves to a comprehensive program to help educators create environments within schools that would make 'Individually Guided Education' a reality. We wanted to find an approach that would make constant improvement a way of life in schools. . . .rather than a periodic flirtation."

Now that IGE has been successfully implemented on the elementary level, articulation has necessitated its being introduced into middle and junior high schools serving 10- to 15-year-old students. During the 1973-74 school year, the program began to reach the high school level serving the 14- to 19-year-olds.

Dr. Willis reported further:

"We have definite evidence that change is taking place in schools. We can verify that attitudes toward IGE are overwhelmingly favorable.

"We have learned that IGE's influence on cost is mixed; we see that the dollar cost of the program is largely determined by the individual school. We find that the increased workload and time required to implement IGE are sources of concern among many teachers and administrators. Finally, we note that IGE schools need to make special efforts to keep their communities informed of what's happening in the schools.

"Much of the credit for the success of IGE belongs to the many educators, students, parents, and other citizens who have made this program possible."

Together with the Idea Kettering Foundation, Fitchburg State College is committed to two main goals:

1. Developing new ways to accelerate improvement in education.
2. Developing a new strategy for improving schools.

As we examine tonight the relation of schools to a State College in implementing these two goals, it may be helpful to turn back a few pages of history and to review some basic principles of IGE and understand why this process for improvement exists the way it does today.

In 1966 a group of 18 elementary schools formed the League of Cooperating Schools, in Southern California. A cross-section of students from varied socio-economic strata comprised the school population.

This five-year project became entitled the Study of Educational Change and School Improvement.

RESULT - SIX OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. *The individual school is a strategic unit of educational change.*

Each school, with its students, principal, teacher, parents, and residents of the surrounding community, is a strategic and significant vehicle for bringing about educational improvement.

But the Study of Educational Change and School Improvement showed after five years that the individual teacher who wants to try new patterns of instruction rarely succeeds unless the school supports her efforts. Try as she may to adopt some interesting new ideas, her attempts at change are easily frustrated when unsympathetic colleagues regard her as a threat to their own professional standing, or when an unsympathetic principal who regards her as "radical" or "unreliable" translates this personal reaction into a denial of promotion or tenure.

2. *The culture of the school is central both to understanding and to effecting educational improvement.*

Over a period of time, every school develops its own culture which is reflected in a set of beliefs and practices. These "ways of living" deeply affect the school and, in turn, are shared by all who teach or learn in it.

Change efforts must be directed toward obtaining agreement from a critical mass of the school staff that they can do a better job, and toward stimulating them to reach out for help.

3. *Given existing social and educational constraints, most individual schools are not strong enough to overcome the inertia against change built into the typical school district.*

If the education system fails to involve itself in promising innovative educational programs, it may prevent many children from realizing the full potential of their lives.

The school must reach out to other change-minded schools that can offer it emotional and professional backing. What such a school needs most are moral support from other changing schools and professional expertise in solving instructional problems.

As a new social system, the League of Cooperating Schools created a positive "press" for change and for the new expectations, roles, activities, relationships, and rewards that substantive change entails. The result was that both new demands and new resources for staff development were created.

4. *Each school needs a process by which it can deal effectively with its own problems and effect its own change.*

I/D/E/A/ planned that, partly through participation in the League, each school would develop an improvement process: a systematic procedure for discussing and diagnosing its own problems, formulating solutions, and then trying to obtain evidence about the effects of such action.

The process, refined after many experiments, was termed DDAE - - Dialogue, Decision-making, Action, Evaluation. In the light of Massachusetts' Chapter 766 to meet special needs, it has struck me how close this strategy is to the Clinical-Diagnosis, Prescription, Treatment, and Evaluation,-Model.

Guidelines and criteria have been set up to evaluate the quality of instruction - elements such as processes of group interaction, use of professional literature to obtain ideas and suppporting research, planning of faculty meetings, and conducting faculty and small-group meetings.

Teachers became more involved in DDAE, they began to identify staff development and self-improvement as being important areas required to effect the overall educational change desired.

Contrary to typical patterns of in-service training that frequently remove teachers from the schools and ask them to concentrate on problems or programs chosen by someone else, the League strategy focused staff development on problems that had been selected by the principals and teachers themselves.

5. *Some screening, legitimizing, and communicating of ideas beyond what individual schools might do informally must be built into the new social system.*

A consortium of schools is, at best, a loosely defined entity. It needs a central point, a hub. The Central Massachusetts League has as its Hub - Fitchburg State College. The spokes on that wheel that is in perpetual motion are the schools served by the College's League.

Through a newsletter, the Southern California League contributed significantly to the mutual support and assistance roles envisioned early in the project.

"League reports" recounted successes and difficulties. A classified ad section ultimately appeared in which schools noted assistance they could offer to other schools or help they needed in solving a problem. Sometimes, communication occurred directly from school to school; at other times it was facilitated by the hub.

6. *Individuals asked to take risks are more willing to do so when some elements of success are already built into the structure.*

NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS

For this reason, the League's relationship with the Kettering Foundation, I/D/E/A/, and UCLA loomed large.

Teachers from schools that had moved ahead quickly were in demand as group leaders for workshops in neighboring school districts. Needless to say, rarely were they prophets in their own backyards.

Similarly, League principals were called upon relatively early to assume leadership roles in summer conferences and institutes, just as some will be participating in the IGE Clinical to be held this Summer at Fitchburg State College.

Somewhat later, after they had attracted recognition elsewhere, both League principals and teachers served in such capacities in their own school districts.

Finally, staff members in League schools visited each other and provided mutual assistance. They acted, in effect, as consultants to each other.

Beginning in 1968, staff members from I/D/E/A/'s office in Dayton, Ohio, began working directly in schools to seek ways of blending the emerging findings from the Study of Change with specific tactics and strategies to individualize learning programs for students in the context of continuous improvement of the staff and school. Rather than a set of neatly packaged course outlines, the focus of I/D/E/A/'s work was on developing processes that could be applied to any goals that a school and community might adopt.

In addition they incorporated the "Peer group intervention strategy" from the Study of Change.

A basic consideration in helping children learn is the recognition that students differ in their learning abilities and disabilities, interest and disinterest, rate and style just as they differ in height, weight, physical strength and fingerprints. Therefore, the learning program for each individual youngster must be tailored or customized to meet his special needs.

Another point of focus for the work of the Innovative Programs staff sought ways to help teachers vary the instructional setting to meet different purposes for different students. Recognizing that a single instructional setting affords little individual attention, the I/D/E/A/ staff worked with teachers to help them vary the instructional mode (large-group, small-group, tutorial, independent study) as well as the time, space, and place for learning.

The staff also worked to help teachers develop ways of organizing to accommodate student differences in their responses to individual teachers.

Seven steps were implemented, embracing concepts of Dialogue, Decision-making, Action, and Evaluation. These work just as well for individual teachers measuring their own performance as for Learning Communities assessing group progress. These seven steps which are the same seven that our 9 League schools have been working on this year are:

1. List goals and performance criteria
2. Select specific objectives
3. Evaluate the present level of performance
4. Plan for improvement
5. Implement the plans developed
6. Reassess the plans, the implementation procedures, and the degree of achievement
7. Select new goals and objectives and re-cycle to the next level in the process

The concept of teaming in IGE means that all teachers in an IGE Learning Community share instructional responsibility for all the children they work with. They meet regularly to make decisions about educational goals and designs for learning.

In addition to recognizing teacher differences, IGE puts them to work through team-planning and role-specialization. By constantly working and planning together, teachers in each Learning Community learn each others' strengths and weaknesses and plan teaching assignments with these individual traits in mind. Further, through constant assessment of student progress, diagnoses of learning problems, and planned variations in all the components of the learning situation, IGE teachers learn to fit their capabilities to their students' needs.

THE ADVISOR CONCEPT: Each Teacher Is a Guide

While most teachers in IGE schools recognized the advantages of a cooperative approach to educating youngsters, many of them expressed concern over the feeling that in the process of "individualizing instruction" they might lose sight of the individual.

Recognizing that effective human relationships are a part of the total learning process for both teachers and students, I/D/E/A/ incorporated an advisor concept into its Change Program. Under the advisor arrangement, each teacher assumes primary responsibility for guiding the education of a percentage of the Learning Community's students.

The advisory function in IGE is a natural extension of the traditional teacher-student relationship. It is directed to the need of most students to identify closely with one person and to develop the security which comes from the feeling that there is at least one special person within the school who can be depended upon for encouragement and guidance.

The advisor in an IGE school also is responsible for ensuring that each of his 20 to 30 advisees learns how to learn. Setting goals for student achievement and getting the student to examine his own goals are important functions of the advisor.

IGE CLINICAL TRAINING WORKSHOPS

I/D/E/A/ set about designing a training program that would enable teachers to use their new flexibility.

The result is the IGE clinical training workshop for teachers and for leadership people participating in the program.

The workshops are "clinical" because they include students, and because participants learn IGE processes with the assistance of persons who have demonstrated their own proficiency at those processes.

Participants are not told a new method of teaching; instead, they learn new methods of using them and by drawing support and knowledge from their peers; they are taught with the same methods that they will be expected to use. By the close of the workshop participants must be able to <u>demonstrate their ability to use</u> IGE processes in improving their own teaching and in helping the teachers with whom they work.- - PBTE is similar.

Teachers in an IGE school are expected to have a high degree of decision-making authority. They will decide who will belong to each Learning Community, they will choose curricular materials, they will play a major role in determining the allocation of the school's resources (within district budget guidelines) and they will choose general and specific learning objectives. This authority brings with it a considerable degree of responsibility - - and the IGE clinical training workshops are designed to ensure that teachers exercise their authority and meet their responsibilities

For this reason I/D/E/A/ and its participating institutions require that the following criteria be met before any school commits itself to IGE implementation:

All staff members will have an opportunity to examine their own goals and the IGE outcomes before a decision is made to participate in the program.

The school district will approve the school staff's decision to implement the I/D/E/A/ Change Program for IGE.

EACH LEAGUE OF SCHOOLS HAS A TRAINED IGE FACILITATOR

Consistent with the strategies developed in the Study of Change, the IGE program involves clusters of schools committed to the IGE outcomes.

I/D/E/A/'s implementation procedures are to work through "Intermediate Agencies" such as local and state education agencies, colleges and universities, and other service institutions. We are pleased to announce that Fitchburg State College has been selected as an Intermediate Agency by Idea-Kettering and that this will enhance the college's ability to deliver services to the schools in its League, just as the Merrimack Education Center, the other Intermediate Agency in Massachusetts, has done so admirably for years.

This is one among many means Fitchburg State College sees as essential in the process of systematic renewal of public education in Massachusetts. This is the title of the position paper in your folder which I have written to share with you this evening. We see renewal happen as a result of the partnership among the school districts, the League, the Cooperatives, the State Department of Education and the College.

One of the initial actions of the Intermediate Agency in this IGE program for renewal is to appoint a League Facilitator who is assigned and trained to perform the following tasks:

Use his knowledge about IGE processes to help League members achieve the program goals.

Assist school personnel to recognize the degree to which IGE processes are being practiced by the principal, Learning Communities, and/or Learning Communities' teachers.

Train selected personnel to serve in leadership capacities for IGE within a given geographical area.

Identify and recruit potential schools to participate in an IGE League.

Develop a system for collecting and sharing data pertaining to resources and curricular materials to assist with implementation of IGE.

Establish and coordinate the functions of a League within its given geographical area.

Many of us here tonight are keenly aware of the professional finesse and expertise with which Dr. Pat Barbaresi has filled this role of facilitator and Mr. Rick Houston that of field agent for the Central Massachusetts League during this first year of existence.

During 1970, there were 2 Intermediate Agencies and 125 schools participating in the project. A total of 32 Intermediate Agencies and 353 schools were involved in the project during 1971. There were 49 agencies and 817 schools in 1972. As of Sept. 1973, there were 84 Intermediate Agencies and more than 1,000 elementary schools participating and 2,000 others in connection with the University of Wisconsin. 3,000 elementary schools in 4 years,not one of which has changed back from IGE!

There are 8 Agencies pilot testing IGE with 30 middle and junior high schools, two in Massachusetts--Kennedy School in Woburn, and McKay Campus School at Fitchburg State College. The program has been introduced to selected high school IGE Leagues during the 1973-74 school year.

In addition to development efforts in this country, American-sponsored schools in 36 countries are in some stage of implementing the program. Pres. Hammond just recently returned from a first-hand inspection of IGE schools in Spain and the Canary Islands where some of Fitchburg State's students have taught and will teach.

Through an agreement in 1969, results of the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Cognitive Learning's experience with the Multi-Unit organizations were combined with I/D/E/A/'s research and development efforts to prepare in-service materials relating to IGE. I/D/E/A/ and the Center define their respective programs differently, however, and use different implementation strategies and materials. Both institutions use the term "Individually Guided Education." Some of the Intermediate Agencies and schools participating in the I/D/E/A/ Change Program also participate in the Wisconsin Research and Development Center's Program.

NONGRADED SCHOOLS

This approach provides continuous progress and frequently involves multi-age grouping. Nongrading not only provides an opportunity to fulfill responsibilities consistent with professional knowledge about students and break the lockstep movement through a rigid curriculum. It also makes a difference, in what students achieve.

Bob F. Steere recently summarized a number of research studies which statistically evaluated various nongraded programs. Though there are studies where graded students scored significantly higher than nongraded students in pupil achievement, the bulk of the studies in Steere's report favor a nongraded approach.

More recently, Barbara Nelson Pavan has reported on 16 research studies comparing schools having nongraded or open classrooms with graded classrooms. Pavan states, "There has accumulated solid evidence of the value of nongradedness." She cites the following tendencies:

Comparisons using standardized achievement tests continue to favor nongradedness.

Comparisons using a mental health component show results that favor nongradedness.

Fewer children spend longer than usual time in nongraded schools.

In general, the Center reports show that students achieve higher and their attitudes

toward school improve in the Multi-Unit school. In addition, Center studies indicate that the Multi-Unit Elementary School is a more professionally satisfying environment for teachers and principals.

Since the introduction of the Wisconsin Design for Reading Skill Development(WDRSD), more substantial differences have favored students who received this individualized instruction. There have also been some favorable results in the areas of handwriting, mathematics, spelling, and language arts.

A group of legislators is worried about the effect of too little reading ability. Senators Peter H. Dominick (Colo.) and J. Glenn Beall, Jr. (Md.) would have the federal government spend $176 million over the next three years to improve Johnny's reading skill.

Proponents of such legislation say that half of urban school children have a reading ability lower than their grade level; 7 million pupils need the help of reading specialists; 90% of the 700,000 kids who drop out of school annually are poor readers; 18.5 million adults do not read well enough to follow simple directions or to fill out employment forms.

The Proposed Elementary School Reading Emphasis Act would provide pupils with supplemental reading instruction, establish a Reading Corps of specialists, undertake a TV public education program and stimulate research.

MULTI-UNIT SCHOOLS

In their March 1971 summary the Wisconsin researchers indicate the desirable effects of the Multi-Unit organization and a concerted attack on curriculum improvement along the IGE model.

Results of a study by R.G. Nelson show that Multi-Unit Elementary School pupils do like school, have a higher opinion of themselves, and show greater self-respect than pupils in a traditional school. A summary of the Nelson study results follows:

Pupils in Multi-Unit Elementary Schools displayed a more positive attitude toward their fellow students, toward instruction, toward their school plant, and toward their community than did their counterparts in traditional schools.

Pupils in Multi-Unit schools exhibited evidence of a more positive self-concept as learners than did pupils in traditionally organized schools.

Pupils in Multi-Unit schools revealed a more positive attitude toward school in general (school morale) than did pupils in traditionally organized schools with respect to their attitude toward teachers, administrators, and staff.

EVIDENCE OF CHANGE is definite. IGE schools that are a year or two into the program differ markedly from their prior IGE status in terms of organization, use of staff resources, availability of various learning options for students, and leeway afforded students and teachers in selecting and pursuing learning goals. These changes are evidence of progress toward individualized learning, and some of the changes (nongraded schooling, for example) have been confirmed in other contexts as contributing to higher student achievement.

NATIONAL EVALUATION STUDY OF ATTITUDES TOWARD IGE

A National Evaluation Study of Attitudes Toward IGE has been completed within the past year. The most comprehensive analysis of perception of the value and effectiveness of the IGE program is a continuing study by Belden Associates of Dallas, Texas, a private opinion research organization. Belden's first-year report was based on a representative sample of administrators, teachers, students and parents in 73 schools where IGE was in operation during the 1972-73 school year.

ATTITUDES TOWARD IGE are overwhelmingly favorable. Some data from the Belden Study indicate:

96% of the school principals interviewed said IGE was "excellent or good." None said it was "poor".

75% of the teachers said IGE allowed them to do a "better job of teaching". Four percent said it "kept them from doing a good job."

74% of the teachers said IGE works "equally well" for fast and slow learners. Sixteen percent said "better for fast" and 10%, "better for slow."

IGE is:	*Adminis.*	*Teachers*	*Parents*
Excellent	68%	42%	34%
Good	28	53	42
Fair	1	3	8
Poor	—	1	4
Don't know, or no ans.	3	1	12
Total	100%	100%	100%

	Years in IGE:		
	Total	*One Year*	*Two or More Yrs.*
Learned more this year than last year	75%	75%	77%
Learned same amount	20	21	19
Learned less	5	4	4
Total	100%	100%	100%

Of the parents interviewed, 61% said IGE teaching methods are better, 10% said they are worse; 51% said their child's school was better than other schools, 9% said "not as good"; 59% were "very satisfied" with their child's progress, 4% were "very dissatisfied"; 43% felt their children had learned more under IGE, while only 5% felt they had learned less.

Of the sample of students interviewed, 58% found school subjects "more interesting this year," 5% said "less interesting"; 55% reported enjoying school more, 11% reported enjoying it less; and 35% said they liked their teachers more after IGE while 9% said they liked them less.

And we believe that if teachers are expected to change, they must be given the freedom to elect that change. Among the many lessons learned about educational improvement, one thing stands out above all the rest: If teachers are expected to change their methods of behaving to ones considered desirable for better instruction, they must be given the freedom to elect that change; attempts to impose change upon

them may yield some short-term, superficial success, but will fail in the long run.

We have observed that teachers working in IGE schools are changing their accustomed ways of behaving. In a period of general despair over the prospects for continuing educational change, there are reasons for hope - - - and Fitchburg State College is pleased to have the opportunity to work with classroom professionals who have chosen to work toward continuous improvement in learning opportunities for students. For those of us who have enjoyed working together the past year or two, and who intend to continue to do so, IGE says where it's at. We're interested in and devoted to the individual, we believe in a process that is guided, planned and strategic - if it's individual and it's guided, then we believe that we can truly be a dynamic part of a process that is truly educational - and that's what IGE is all about!